in not being. Then it is pointless to long for the ach anUiges of something I abhor. *There arc certain tilings (hat I shall never have.* Oh, if only I could really convince myself of that! But it is very haul. At least I shall not compromise myself by showing that I do desire them. Kssential to remain tightly buttoned up in one's attitude like Barbey cVAurcvilly in his frock-coat,

But, in practical matters, I always flounder absurdly. T am bold in taking the first steps, but I stop after the first effort; and you never get returns before the second effort. I make many acquaintances and then neglect to go back and see them because they bore me.

I can never succeed in entirely convincing myself that certain tilings really exist. It has always seemed to me that they ceased to exist when I stopped thinking about them; or at least that they are no longer interested in me when I cease to be interested in them. To me the woild is a mirror, and I am amazed when it gives a bad re (lection of me.

One should want *only one thing* and want it constantly. Then one is sure of getting it But 1 desire everything and consequently get nothing. Each time I discover, and too late, that one thing had come to me while I was running after another.

One of Louis's dodges, which has always worked, is imagining that he instinctively and passionately desires everything that serves his purpose.

I must stop puffing up my pride (in this notebook) just for the sake of doing as Stendhal did. The spirit of imitation; watch out for it. It is useless to do something simply because another has done it. One must remember the rule of conduct of the great after having isolated it from the contingent facts of their lives, rather than imitating the little facts,

Dare to be yourself. I must underline that in my head too.

Don't ever do anything through affectation or to make people like you or through imitation or for the pleasure of contradicting,

No compromise (either ethical or artistic). Perhaps it is very dangerous for me to see other people; I always have too great a desire to please; perhaps I need solitude. I might as well admit it frankly; my (solitary and sullen childhood made me what I am. Perhaps it would be better to exaggerate that aspect. Perhaps I would find great strength in doing so. (But there should not be any "perhaps" in matters of conduct, There's no use creating question marks. Answer everything in advance. What a ridiculous undertaking! How rash!)

Brunetiere talks of the men of the seventeenth century (at least most of them; not Pascal) who never indulged in profound thoughts on life (like Shakespeare's, for instance) or who never dared to express them because society had accustomed those writers to make their thought accessible to women.